

3
CORRECTED DETAIL

OF THE

S P E E C H

OF THE

RIGHT HON. WILLIAM PITT,

CHANCELLOR OF HIS MAJESTY'S COURT OF EXCHEQUER,

DELIVERED IN THE

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

ON TUESDAY THE 12TH INSTANT, *Feb^r 1793.*

PREPARATORY TO HIS MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS ON HIS
MAJESTY'S MESSAGE, RELATIVE TO THE WAR WITH FRANCE,

TO WHICH IS ADDED,

THE DECREE OF THE 19TH OF NOVEMBER, 1792.

BY

The EDITOR of *the* DIARY.

L O N D O N.

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PHYSICS DEPARTMENT

REPORT OF THE PHYSICS DEPARTMENT

FOR THE YEAR 1900-1901

CHICAGO, ILL., 1901

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO, CHICAGO, ILL.

PHYSICS DEPARTMENT

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P R E F A C E.

A Considerable degree of inaccuracy and misconception having been observed in the Statement given by several of the Newspapers of the Speeches in Parliament, on the subject of the present War; the following Report of the Substance of Mr. Pitt's Speech on the important Debate on the 12th day of *February* 1793, is given to the Public: Without undertaking for its being perfectly correct, as to particular Expressions, it is hoped that it will appear to be a faithful Statement of the most material Topics.

P R E F A C E

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A
CORRECTED DETAIL
OF THE
S P E E C H
OF THE
RIGHT HONOURABLE WILLIAM PITT
ON THE SUBJECT OF THE PRESENT
WAR WITH FRANCE.

I N proposing the Address which I shall have the honor to move, I feel that in one view of the subject I might perhaps be dispensed from the necessity of entering into much argument—for whatever doubts might have dwelt in the breasts of that small minority who dissented from the rest of the House on a former occasion—whatever doubts those few gentlemen might have entertained in respect to the part which we ought to take, with a view to the general interests of Europe—whatever doubt, as to the nature and degree of that satisfaction for injuries committed against ourselves, which in some shape or other was universally admitted to be necessary—whatever doubt either as to the conduct of Ministers, or as to any thing contained in the assurances given to His Majesty in the last Address;

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dress; such, however, are the *present* circumstances, that it is now no longer possible for me to expect any thing less than the unanimous concurrence of the House. For the point now to be decided can no longer be stated by any one as a question of Inconvenience against Inconvenience, turning on a comparison to be made between a certain degree of present disadvantages on the one hand, and of future danger on the other; but the simple question is, Whether War having been actually declared against you by an enemy who is in all respects the aggressor, the House will proceed to an Address, promising to give His Majesty their effectual support, and enable him, as far as depends upon us, to render the operations of the War speedy and successful.

The War is now at your doors—a War threatening the most fatal consequences to the very liberties and independence of this Country. I think therefore I should do an injury to the Character of the British Parliament and the British Nation, if I were to suppose that there could be two opinions upon the measures now to be pursued. Every man, I am persuaded, will now vie with his neighbour in testifying his loyalty to his Sovereign, his value for the British Constitution, his resolution to maintain the independence, the liberties, the internal order, and general interests of his Country.

But though in this situation of things, no long
dis-

discussion can be necessary, yet it may not be useless to take some view of what has already passed, and to bring to the recollection of the House, what were their own impressions when they voted the last Address.

It had been the sentiment of the British Government, from the commencement of the internal disorders in France, that whatever might be supposed by some the inducements to avail ourselves of the weakness of that country ; whatever temptation there might be from long and ancient jealousy, from rival interests, or even from more recent injuries, (all of them in my opinion, mistaken grounds of War) Great Britain ought nevertheless to remain entirely neutral with respect to their internal dissensions ; and accordingly a line of strict neutrality has been scrupulously and uniformly observed.

It might, I think, have been expected that in consequence of so fair and liberal a conduct on our part, a reciprocal system of neutrality would have been observed on the side of France. But this was not the only consideration by which she ought to have felt herself bound ; she stood engaged by positive assurances given in the month of May, 1792, (which appear in the papers before the House) “ to respect the rights of this Country, and its allies--to abstain from all attempts to “ disturb the internal government of other Countries, and whatever might be the Fate of War, to adhere

" adhere to the ancient limits of France, and
 " to aim at no extension of dominion." This
 was an exprefs and positive engagement, in con-
 sideration of which the assurances of our neutra-
 lity were given, and on which they were distinct-
 ly grounded.

But what did the House feel to be the situa-
 tion of things at the time of the last Address?
 Instead of renouncing every interference with
 independent nations as she promised; France had
 proceeded to attempt nothing less in effect than
 the dissolution of the internal system of every
 Country of Europe: She had passed one resolu-
 tion, which, by its contempt of existing treaties,
 went to destroy all the relations in which inde-
 pendent nations stood to each other; and by
 another formal decree, under the insulting
 title of Assistance and Fraternity, had invited,
 encouraged, and offered to defend and maintain
 treasons and insurrections from one end of
 Europe to the other; and this design had in the
 most open manner been particularly and ex-
 pressly applied to this Country, by publicly re-
 ceiving, careffing, and encouraging embassies to
 the National Assembly from societies here, who
 were evidently aiming at the destruction of our
 happy Constitution.

As to the assurance given by France of confining
 herself to her own territory, the House felt at
 the time of the last Address, that even in the very

first moment of her success, she not only did not fulfil this assurance, but violated it in the most striking manner, by the union of Savoy, as an 84th department of France.

By express resolutions for the destruction of the existing government of all invaded Countries—by the means of Jacobin Societies promoting the same measures—by public orders given to their Generals—by the whole system adopted in this respect by the National Convention—by their whole conduct in the Austrian Netherlands (which has been evidently calculated to make that Country in substance, if not in name, a Government of France) as well as by the actual annexation of the Country of Savoy they had marked their determination to extend the limits of France, and to provide means through the medium of every new conquest at once to propagate their principles and to extend their dominion: besides this, by their conduct towards the United Provinces on the subject of the Scheld, they had not only violated the rights of our allies which they had recently promised to respect, but they had done it in violation of repeated treaties, of which they were themselves the guarantees, and on principles of pretended Right, which, if admitted, would equally entitle them to overturn every treaty existing in the world.

Viewing things in this light, the House felt that

that his Majesty was called upon to interfere, (in such time and manner as circumstances might point out) to prevent the extension of this alarming and presumptuous system.

It appeared however to the House, that although some of the grounds of offence were such as would not have allowed of twenty-four hours deliberation in ordinary times; yet under the present circumstances his Majesty's Ministers had thought it right to avail themselves of every opening which could afford any chance of a satisfactory explanation, as well as an adequate security against the prosecution or the renewal of these dangerous schemes.

The explanations which have taken place have been laid before the House, and on considering the result, it appeared to be the general feeling not only that no satisfaction or security was given or offered on the three points of complaint which I have enumerated, but that the very principles complained of were persisted in and avowed; and that, if the alternative was either an acquiescence in those points which were still asserted by France, or an actual war against her—of the two, War was preferable.

It was preferable, because it was a shorter and surer way to that end which the House had undoubtedly in view as its ultimate object, a secure and lasting peace: for as to a precarious peace—a peace loaded with nearly a war expence—a peace

not

not only confessed to be doubtful, and probably short, but moreover leading ultimately to a much more disadvantageous contest, than that which we might now engage in—this could not be the object of the House; for the blessings of peace are nearly annihilated if they are deprived of that security which is essential to their enjoyment. If you love peace; if you understand its many blessings and advantages; if you value your commerce; if you wish to increase your revenue, and to consolidate and improve the internal happiness of your country—be assured you do this more completely by prudent and timely measures to obtain a solid peace, than by a tame acquiescence in that course of conduct in other countries, which has for its avowed object, and is not unlikely to produce as its end, the destruction of all the blessings you now enjoy, and all your present security.

Gentlemen seem to wonder at my venturing to mention Revenue and Commerce. Undoubtedly War is not favourable to their improvement—is any man so void of all common sense as not to know that War, in both these respects, exposes you to losses? This observation however applies to the case of a war deferred, as well as to a war at this instant.

But whether we are to have a present, or whether a future war, I beg to observe, is not now the

the question. One would imagine gentlemen thought that we were not now at war, and that we had still an option. But France, let it be remembered, has actually decided the point. War, it was before thought, (even though voluntary on our part) was preferable to such a peace as we had reason to expect: But if war was then preferable, what is the case now? There is no choice whatever left to us, and there can therefore be no doubt or division of sentiment on the present occasion.

Having reminded the House of the circumstances in which we found ourselves at the time of the former message from his Majesty, let us trace the events that have since followed.

Now the House will remember that I declared at that period, I had little hope of peace; not that I could fail to be desirous of it, but because, as I confessed to you, I saw none of those dispositions in the actual Government of France which could encourage any such expectations. I mentioned, however, that up to the moment of hostility it would still continue to be possible, that some new circumstance might arise, of which advantage might be taken, in order to favour, and eventually to produce, a pacification.

What then are the circumstances that have since happened?

Mr. Chauvelin, formerly the accredited Minister of his Most Christian Majesty, having offered

no further propositions subsequent to that ultimatum, which appeared to Government and to the House to be unsatisfactory, and having, after the unhappy Death of the Sovereign whom he represented, no public capacity in this country, (the King not having thought proper to receive him in the newly tendered character of Plenipotentiary from the French Republic) had, previous to the last debate, been directed to quit the kingdom. It had nevertheless been the uniform line pursued by Government to decline no species of communication which could be received without a formal recognition of any new authority in France; and therefore even after the ultimatum which I have mentioned had been given in by Mr. Chauvelin, his Majesty's Ministers still expressed their willingness to receive any further communication.

Nor was this prevented by the dismissal of Mr. Chauvelin: he himself was not ordered away immediately; an interval of eight days was allowed to him; during which time, if he had any *bona fide* proposal to make, he had full opportunity of doing it, provided he thought proper to tender it without assuming the formal character of Plenipotentiary on the part of the Republic.

But even at the time subsequent to the departure of this gentleman, who was not sent away till after he had insisted on presenting his new credentials, there existed no obstacle that could prevent any
fresh

fresh communications, if there was a disposition to make any in the mode in which we had shewn ourselves ready to receive them.

The first event then which took place after the last debate was, the arrival of a gentleman of the name of Maret, calling himself French Chargé d'Affaires, and professing to be sent for the purpose of taking charge of Mr. Chauvelin's papers, (which it happened however that Mr. Chauvelin had carried away with him). This gentleman was suffered to remain here till within a few days; but I must remark, that during the whole time he staid, he neither made, nor offered to make to any member of his Majesty's Government, any one communication, except the mere notice of his arrival.

The next event, in the order of time, which I have to state is, the news received from France of *an embargo in all her ports, detaining all British vessels and persons*—a step which could hardly be otherwise considered than as an act of open hostility; a step taken without notice, contrary to the law of nations, and such as can in no case be warranted but by some aggression made or threatened on the part of the country, whose ships and subjects are detained.

In the present instance, the embargo was not barely contrary to the law of nations: there was an actual Treaty subsisting between the two countries, which expressly provided that even

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“ in the case of a rupture” (and no rupture had then taken place) “ time shall be given for the removal of persons and effects.”

Notwithstanding this embargo laid on in all the ports of France, which I can consider in no other light than that of a most violent and outrageous act, such was the disposition to peace in his Majesty's Ministers, that even this circumstance also was made no effectual bar to further communications. A singular circumstance happened, which was no other than the arrival of intelligence from his Majesty's Minister at the Hague, on the very day which brought the news of the embargo, stating, that he had received an intimation from General Dumourier of the General's wish to have an interview, for the sake of seeing whether it were yet possible to adjust the differences between the two countries, and to promote a general pacification.

Instead, therefore, of considering the embargo, which they had a good right to do, as an act of hostility, instead of refusing to allow of any communication after this aggression, his Majesty's Ministers sent instructions on the same day on which they heard of the embargo, authorising the Ambassador at the Hague to open the proposed communication with General Dumourier; and they did this with great satisfaction on several accounts; First, because it might be done without committing the King's dignity; for the General of an army
may

may even in the very field of battle open any negotiation for peace, without supposing any recognition of authority on either side. But this sort of communication was desirable also, because, if successful, its tendency was immediately to stop the progress of war in the most practicable, and perhaps in the only practicable way. No time was therefore lost in authorizing the King's Minister at the Hague to proceed in the pursuit of so desirable an object, if it could be done in a safe and honourable mode; but not otherwise. I have now brought the history down to that moment when the explosion happened.

Before the answer to the communication from Mr. Dumourier, professing a disposition to pacification, had reached the Hague, and before it was possible it should arrive, the Declaration of War took place at Paris.

These are the circumstances which I have to state; and now if the House is to debate at all, the only question before them is shortly this; whether they will enable his Majesty, under all these circumstances, to repel this open aggression.

But having spoken of the Declaration of War in France, I will now enter somewhat at large into the grounds of that declaration; and these I shall deduce not from my own reasonings, but from what are avowed to be the grounds by the Convention itself. For under the name of a decree,

cree, they have published a sort of manifesto on this subject, which I doubt not, has been seen by most gentlemen in the House, and to every article of which I mean to refer myself.

It begins with one general proposition, of which all that follow seem to be mere illustrations, viz.

“ That the King of England has not ceased
“ particularly since the 10th of August, to give
“ to the French Nation proofs of his ill-will,
“ and of his attachment to the coalition of
“ Crowned Heads.”

Now although the National Convention make this bold and positive assertion, “ That the King
“ of England has *never ceased* to shew his ill-will”-- though they lay this down as the very foundation of the War, and as the justification of every violent step they take---in the first place it is most remarkable that even they themselves have never once stated, nor even attempted to state, any one act of the King of England, of any kind whatever, by which this ill-will has been discovered *antecedent to the 10th of August*; and yet they have the confidence to say, “ He has
“ never ceased to shew it.” I, on the contrary, will venture to assert, and I defy all contradiction, that antecedent to that time the strictest neutrality was most studiously and religiously observed. What has passed since that period I shall have occasion to observe upon hereafter.

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But the Declaration says also, that the King had " given proofs of his attachment to the coalition of Crowned Heads," and that he had done *this*, " before the 10th of August."

What then was this coalition of Crowned Heads at that period? a coalition which is represented to have been set on foot for the purpose of invading France, and changing its internal government.

Now, Sir, I do here, in the face of this House, declare, in the first place, that the assertion of our having made that treaty with the Emperor, which is the one single proof alledged of this supposed interference, is utterly and absolutely destitute of the shadow of a foundation. In the next place, I do no less publicly and explicitly declare, that not only no such coalition treaty has been made, but that no one step has been taken, and no one engagement of any kind has been entered into, either before the 10th of August or since, with any view to any interference in the internal affairs of France, nor with any view to dictate any form of government to that country. I assert that the whole of the interference of Great Britain has been altogether subsequent to, and purely in consequence of previous French aggressions, that it has been with the general view of seeing whether, either by our own single exertions, or by acting in concert with any other powers, it were possible to repress the present French system of aggrandisement, and aggression—that it has been with a view of seeing whether we could not promote this desirable end, either
separately

seperately or jointly, with others, without the necessity of engaging in War. But I desire at the same time explicitly to avow, that it undoubtedly was the View of Government, if the endeavours which I have already stated, should prove fruitless, to embark in such a manner, with all the other Powers of Europe, as may seem most calculated to promote the same end which I have described, and to secure eventual success.

The next charge brought by the National Convention, is, “ That, after the Epoch of the
 “ 10th of August, the King had ordered his Amb-
 “ bassador to retire from Paris, being unwilling
 “ to recognize the Provisional Executive Council
 “ created by the Legislative Assembly.” This is one of the proofs of ill-will, (subsequent indeed to the 10th of August), and one of the alledged foundations of the War.

Because the King of England, after that bloody 10th of August—a day paralleled indeed, but not eclipsed by the 3d of September, ordered his Ambassador to retire, France supposes herself justified in declaring War.

I desire the House will recollect what was the situation of things in France at that time. Whether the Faction who then usurped the government were to give way, (as it proved that they did in part) within a month after to fresh violence—or what new revolution was to be the event of all those horrible convulsions, who
 could

could then judge? I ask was it then safe, decent, or honorable, that an accredited Ambassador from the King of England, should be holding his residence at Paris at such a period? Neither was the idea of hostility, which is now so confidently assumed from this circumstance, ever before imputed on this ground even by France herself; nor on any one principle of the Law of Nations, could such an imputation be justified? It is a fair question for consideration, whether, in the case of a Nation subverting all its old authorities the newly substituted government shall be recognized or not by any other Power? and on what principle can this right in an independent country to withhold its recognition of a newly constituted power, or to judge for itself of the proper time of recognizing it, be denied?

But the case was still stronger: When there was every concomitant circumstance of tumult violence, and blood, as well as every symptom of instability, was every foreign Nation *then* bound immediately to come forward, and acknowledge this new and sudden authority? to acknowledge it before it was well constituted—before it was known what this authority was? France by its own confession had not yet given itself a Constitution. The very complaint in the Decree, is, that the King, “would not recognize the *provisional* Executive Council.” France, I repeat, has not yet given itself a Constitution—all was provisional,

visional, and so it remains to this day ; it is a *provisional* Council, a *provisional* Legislature, a *provisional* Constitution; and this is what they go to war with us for not recognizing. As yet they have not proceeded to form any Constitution whatever, and when they shall have formed it, they are then to present it to the people of France for their approbation, without which, according to their own principles, it can have no validity. Every thing therefore is temporary, being either usurpation on the one hand, or acquiescence on the other. The Revolution of the 10th of August, instead of being conformable to the previous sense of the French Nation itself, was in express contradiction to the very Constitution which the Nation had sworn to maintain, and to the professed sentiments of a great majority of the Departments, who had recently declared themselves *against* a Republican Government ; and expressed their reverence for that Constitution which established Hereditary Monarchy as one of its fundamental principles ; asserting at the same time the Inviolability of the Monarch. Now therefore I must observe that the British Ambassador had been sent to the King of France, the only acknowledged Executive Power of that Country; and when, by the forcible and bloody Revolution of the 10th of August, the exercise of Monarchy was suspended, it followed of course that the Minister sent to that Monarch must retire.

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The succeeding charge is “ that the Cabinet
 “ of St. James’s discontinued from the period of
 “ the 10th of August its correspondence with the
 “ French Ambassador in London, under pre-
 “ tence of the suspension of the former King of
 “ the French.” I have shewn already what this
 suspension was. It was the suspension of a King
 recognized by several preceding National As-
 semblies, and also by the French Nation. Nor
 was this French Minister at that time any other-
 wise accredited than by what they term “ the
 “ former King of the French.”

It is observable also that this discontinuance
 of the correspondence was at a time when they
 themselves on their part never asked us to receive
 nor ever tendered either publicly or privately,
 any one species of communication.

The next motive for their going to War is,
 “ That since the opening of the Convention, we
 “ have neither corresponded with nor acknow-
 “ ledged the powers of the Convention.” That
 we refused to correspond officially is perfectly
 true, and I have already stated under what cir-
 cumstances we did so. But when was this refu-
 sal to correspond on our part?—when was the
 proposal to correspond on theirs? It was in the
 month of December; at a time when we had not
 only a fair right to choose, whether we would ac-
 knowledge the French Republic or not, on the ge-
 neral principles of the law of nations, which I have
 before

before stated; but when we had received also such actual *provocations* from France as would have fully justified our withdrawing our Ambassador, if we had sent one, as well as our demanding satisfaction from them.

I have no difficulty in adding, that as the National Assembly were at this time embarked in that lamentable proceeding, which ended in the death of the King, this was most unquestionably an additional reason for not then opening any formal communication with the Republic, or its Ambassador, which should appear to give a sanction to their conduct. I do *not* wish to mention either the proceeding itself, or the dreadful catastrophe that followed, as a circumstance that ought, in any measure, to draw down upon them a war of *vengeance* from this country, *much less as a reason for our interfering in the internal Government of France.* But surely I may observe, that, whether it might be with a view to the example afforded over all Europe—or to the example in our own Country—whether with a view to general policy and prudence, or to a general justice and humanity; it could on none of these grounds be either desirable or proper that the King of Great Britain should choose the very period when the National Convention were deliberating whether they should put to death their lawful King, for the era of recognizing the Republic.

I next

I next come to the other charges of “stopping the grain to France,”—“forbidding the circulation of assignats,”—“passing an Alien Bill” for the protection of our own lives and persons—and “sheltering the chiefs of the Emigrants:” all which are stated as so many grounds of going to war with us. On the last of these it will be wholly unnecessary to dwell, because it is either a gross misrepresentation of what has passed, or a complaint against the charity and benevolence of the nation.

That some of these measures might require explanation, and might probably even be urged as matters of just provocation, if there had been no previous steps taken by the French themselves which accounted for our conduct, I will readily admit; but every question of this nature must be considered with reference to the circumstances which led to it; and from them it must be determined whether the measures taken are an indication of a hostile disposition, or whether they are justified and rendered necessary by the previous conduct of the Power against whom they are directed, and are confined within the line of reasonable precaution and self-defence. In the latter case they certainly cannot be urged as any ground of provocation.

As to the stopping of the Corn vessels, the point most insisted on; can any thing be imagined that could be more plainly a duty of this Government,

vernment, *they having already seen hostile intentions manifested in France*, both against ourselves and our allies?—when we were expecting equipments and expeditions against us, were we not to stop those supplies of grain and other articles taken from the bosom of this Country, by the help of which those equipments were to be furnished, and those expeditions were to be carried into effect? It would be to suppose Government were either children in understanding, or traitors in their neglect of duty, if we could imagine they would fail to take precautions so obviously necessary to the safety of their own Country.

It has been particularly asked, When was the *period* of stopping these supplies? I answer, it was in the month of December. Now I wish the House to recollect that it was the antecedent month of November that gave birth to all those violent measures in the National Convention which furnished so many just causes of alarm to this Country. It was in November that they passed the Decree for opening the Scheld, in defiance of all existing treaties—It was in November that they passed that Decree of Assistance and Fraternity, which, I say, was little short of a Declaration of War against all neutral nations. In the same memorable month they, in defiance of the declaration of their Ambassador, proceeded to annex Savoy to their own territories

as an 84th Department It was in the same month that under the insulting names of Liberty and Fraternity, they seized upon Brabant, and overturned every authority existing there—troops were then also assembling on the frontiers of Holland, of which the invasion might be feared every hour, and which, if they did invade it, we were bound by treaty to protect. Did we then overstep the principles of self-defence by these cautionary measures?

As for the circumstance of our passing a Bill to forbid the circulation of Assignats in this Country; the very mention of it by the National Convention, as a ground for going to war with us, can serve no other purpose than to shew the general futility of their pretexts, and the want of solid grounds to justify their violent aggressions; for can any one imagine we have not a full right to pass the Bill in question? Is it not in our own Country that we propose to exercise this jurisdiction? Does it not come expressly under own Sovereignty? Do we not, on grounds of convenience, impose restraints, by law, on the circulation of paper-money, issued by our own subjects; and is France in this instance to complain that we have in our own country forbid that to pass for something which most people suppose to be worth nothing; and that we choose to prohibit a *gigantic system of swindling*, which was likely in its effects to be equally injurious to the fortune of
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of ignorant individuals, and to the public interests of the Country? To add this to the Catalogue of our aggressions is so ridiculous, that I only wonder from such a specimen we have not a whole volume, instead of a short manifesto; for I am sure such ingenuity as theirs would easily have furnished out a volume of charges full as plausible as this; and yet I do believe that their ingenuity would have been exhausted, before their modesty would have been in any degree awakened.

But they complain next of the Alien Bill, and they say it is a violation of the Commercial Treaty. Admit for a moment that it is so—But let it be observed, that one clause of this very treaty provides, “that no breach of *its articles*, “shall annul the *Treaty itself*,” but that it shall be made the subject of explanation; much less can the mere breach of *a single article* in this Treaty be stated as *a ground of War*. Nay some of the stipulations of the Treaty, (those particularly which the French violated by the Embargo) were provided with a view to the very case of War itself; and were to remain in force even after the commencement of hostilities—But in the next place, that allegation is unfounded, because the Commercial Treaty is in its very nature inapplicable to the case in question. It had in view the convenience of ordinary commercial transactions; it provided for the resort of persons coming here
purely

purely for mercantile purposes. It cannot fairly be supposed to have any reference to the extraordinary and unforeseen circumstances of an inundation of foreigners of every different descriptions, occasioned by such events as those which we have lately witnessed. It is absurd to suppose that this or any other Country can by any construction of a Treaty of Commerce be deprived of all power to provide for its own internal security. Such a construction must be contrary to the spirit of every Treaty whatever.

But even if we take the *letter* of the present Treaty, their observation will still be found not to apply—Foreigners on each side it says, shall be allowed to reside only “ while they obey the “ laws of each respective country.” What are those Laws of this Country then which Foreigners are bound to obey? The Alien Bill is one of them—it applies to all Foreigners indiscriminately who have arrived here after a given period; it is therefore one of those general laws on condition of obeying which, in all the provisions of it, they are by the treaty allowed to reside.

But setting aside all these considerations, who are the parties that complain? The French; who under an idea of their own danger, have never strictly fulfilled this very Treaty in respect to Aliens; who have for a length of time acted towards British subjects, in their Territories, with ten times more rigor in every particular, than we

now

now exercise towards them, and yet have never been charged with breaking the Commercial Treaty on this account. But now, when for the sake of preventing great political mischief, perhaps assassination, when for the sake of quieting the minds of the people as well as of contributing to the security of peaceable foreigners themselves, we adopt the mild and moderate regulations contained in the Bill referred to, then the National Convention comes forward, and produces this as a ground of War against us.

“ The armament made by great Britain ” is another head of complaint. But on what grounds, and at what period was it that this armament was first set on foot ? Not till after the decree for opening the Scheld, in direct violation of the rights of our allies had taken place.—Not till the decree of Fraternity, or rather the decree of universal War against all governments, had passed in France—Not till the spirit of universal conquest had shewn itself among them—Not till they had received and encouraged at the bar of the Convention a variety of treasonable and seditious applications from the subjects of this and other countries. We then armed, having up to that time confined ourselves to a low peace establishment ; and on the ground of our arming under these circumstances they then tell us that they are justified in declaring actual War upon this Country.

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But they next add, that “ we persecuted at the same time all those who maintained French Revolution principles in England.” That we *persecuted* such people, can only mean, that we *prosecuted* them: we have ventured to prosecute no doubt the libellers of our own Constitution; we have brought them to justice by an appeal to British Juries, proceeding herein according to the acknowledged laws of Great Britain, in a manner congenial to the National Character, necessary to our interests, and resulting from our duty.

I have observed from many symptoms that the National Convention themselves rather despair of seeing French principles make any great progress in England; they acknowledge the unpopularity of these principles, at the very time when they complain of our not encouraging them in this Country: true, however, to their maxim of separating the King from his Parliament, and the Parliament from the people, they still determine to make an insulting appeal to the *Nation* of Great Britain; though, at the very time of their making it, the involuntary confession is extorted from them, that there still exists in England a very general and rooted aversion to French opinions.

We heard a great deal of argument urged in the House on a former day on the absurdity of making War against a Country on account of its opinions—the Right Honourable Gentleman who made the observation could hardly suppose such
a case

a case possible. But here we have indeed an instance afforded us of this very *War against opinions*—a War entered into by the National Convention of France against ourselves on this very ground. They have let you know very plainly that they will not tolerate any where any opinions but their own; and that if they can but obtain the power, they will not fail to enforce their principles at the point of the bayonet in every country under the sun. This is an essential part of these very principles—it is one chief point in their code to *fraternize*, as they call it, the whole world; and that very charge against us, which I am now speaking of, and which they state to be a ground of War, namely, “that we persecute” or, in other words, that we “prosecute (for it is done by due process of law) “all those who maintain French Revolution principles in this Country,” pretty plainly shews what is the real cause of all those wanton aggressions of which I am complaining.—*They do not like our English principles*—that is the true ground of their making War upon us—they will not allow us to prefer our own laws, our own constitution, and our own government, to the present system of their distracted country. Because we, whose liberties have stood the test of experience; happy beyond all nations of the earth in the frame of our government; because we who have reached and are now enjoying as a nation the utmost height of practical prosperity
ever

ever attained in the world, presume to give the preference to those principles, and to that form of constitution, of which we are every day experiencing the good effects, and to resist the introduction of French principles in the place of them; War is therefore to be declared against us—a War it seems too that is to be as violent in respect to their manner of conducting it, as it is novel in all the principles on which it is justified—a War which, if the French do not recede from their threats, must indeed be, as they say, a War of extirpation; for never, never will England, while she has any existence as a nation, receive those principles which the National Convention of France demand that we should substitute in the place of British Liberty.

In the next article of charge against us, there really appears a studied and dextrous art of composition used as if with a design of making it impossible to mistake their views and principles, and of bringing before us, in its strongest colours, the insulting system which they have adopted. It says “that although the provisional Executive
“ Council has taken all measures to preserve peace
“ and *fraternity* with the English Nation; yet the
“ British Minister has nevertheless persevered in
“ his system of ill will, and hostility.”

We are at no loss from the whole tenor of their conduct to understand, what is the *fraternity* which they venture to avow that they have
offered;

offered;— which they presume to complain that we have rejected—this very fraternity which they make War upon *us* for rejecting, we might justly have made War upon *them* for offering. It is in truth no other than an offer to assist in dethroning our Sovereign, in overturning our Legislature, and destroying our Laws, our Liberty, and our Religion. If we have refused to accept this *Fraternity*, if we have resisted these proffered embraces, it is because they were like the embraces of those animals, who embrace only to destroy.

But we not only persevered in our ill will—
 “ We also continued our armaments, we even
 “ sent a fleet up the Scheld.”

By the tone in which they complain of our sending this fleet, any one would suppose that it was sent either to attack some post belonging to France, or to invade the territory of some ally of that country. Who would imagine that it was a fleet sent to protect our own ally, whose territory France had actually invaded, and who had hitherto only entered a formal protest against the invasion?

But it was intended also (it is said) by this fleet, “ to *trouble* the operations of the French in Belgia.” I confess I a little wonder that they should suffer this observation to escape from them under all the circumstances of the state of Belgia—That we should “ have troubled the
 “ operations of the French in Belgia,” is not, I
 believe,

believe, so very popular a charge as to make a very good article in their manifesto—I believe too that these operations in Belgia are nearly as much *troubled* already, and are as little popular, either in that Country or any other, as even the enemies of the French can wish them. But whatever might be the state of those operations, can any thing be more preposterous than to seek for any other cause for our sending our ships to Holland, when it was but too evident that that measure was necessary to secure our allies against the attack on the part of France, which at this very time was every hour expected?

The charge I next come to is that “ the King
“ of England sent away Mr. Chauvelin eight
“ days after the King of France’s death, and that
“ he also *manifested his attachment* to the cause of
“ that Traitor.”

The former part, respecting Mr. Chauvelin’s departure eight days after the King’s Death, I have answered already—as to the latter charge of having manifested an attachment at the same period to him whom *they* call THE TRAITOR, that sentiment was not manifested by the King only, or by his Ministers, but by yourselves, and by the Nation at large. What is this then but openly to proclaim, that it is not your principles, and your opinions only which they would controul, but your very passions and your feelings also. They make it a matter of complaint, and a ground of
War,

War, *Quod gemitus Populi Romani liber fuit*—that you have not restrained your sighs and tears—that in defiance of their command, and rejecting their example, you have dared to give free course to the natural expressions of a just sorrow. But the people of Great Britain will not, they cannot slide such an emotion. The people of Great Britain cannot contemplate this awful event, and withhold the tribute which is due to oppressed innocence, to fallen dignity, to insulted piety; and to persecuted virtue.

I have now gone thro' the grievances on which the Convention states the Declaration of War to be grounded, one only excepted; which turns upon the assertion of our having signed a Treaty with the Emperor in the month of January; an assertion which I have already positively declared to be totally, and absolutely destitute of foundation. One complaint indeed is superadded, which is, that besides the first armament we made a still further augmentation of force, soon after the King's Death; by which they would intimate that it was *owing* to the King's Death, and not to any other cause that we did so. Was it then the King's Death that occasioned this encrease of force? Has the House forgot the new exertions made by France? The new reunions? The new symptoms of Hostility? Have we forgot the memorable Letter, sent previous to this period by the Marine Minister of France to all her sea-ports

ports, prompting them to fit out privateers? announcing their intention to land “ fifty thousand
 “ Caps of Liberty on our Coast to assist the British
 “ Republicans, and to destroy the tyranny of the
 “ British Government?” Was there not also a decree actually passed, ordering the equipment of no less than fifty sail of the line—and this after refusal of satisfaction for the reiterated injuries and provocations which we had before received from them? I leave it therefore to the world to judge how far an augmentation of our force, made at a time subsequent to the measures taken in France, which I have now mentioned, can with any colour of justice be urged as a ground of War on their part.

I go further, and ask, Is there any one of all this list of grievances complained of by the Convention, which does not deserve rather to be stated as an aggravation of their own aggression?

We observed, in the first place, a principle of strict neutrality—when injured, we pushed to the utmost our disposition to receive explanation, even when our grounds of complaint, and the situation of Europe were such, that nothing but the extreme of forbearance could have any longer restrained us from vigorous and decisive measures. In the mean time the Convention themselves declare War, and they are at this hour actually waging war against you.

This is a faithful and not an inflamed description

tion of what has happened. It remains only to be seen, whether under the blessing of Providence, the spirit and resources of a free, a brave, and prosperous people will not, in conjunction with the efforts of most of the other powers of Europe, be successful in giving an effectual check to the progress of a set of men, whose conduct has been such as I have represented, and whose views and principles if unopposed, would lead to nothing short of universal and endless confusion.

I therefore move.

“ That an humble Address be presented to his
 “ Majesty, to return his Majesty the Thanks of
 “ this House, for his most Gracious Message, in-
 “ forming us that the Assembly now exercising
 “ the Powers of Government in France, have,
 “ without previous notice, directed Acts of Hos-
 “ tility to be committed against the persons and
 “ property of his Majesty’s Subjects, in breach of
 “ the Law of Nations, and of the most positive
 “ stipulations of Treaty; and have since, on the
 “ most groundless pretences, actually declared
 “ War against his Majesty, and the United Pro-
 “ vinces. To assure his Majesty, that under the
 “ circumstances of this wanton and unprovoked
 “ aggression, we most gratefully acknowledge
 “ his Majesty’s care and vigilance in taking the
 “ necessary steps for maintaining the Honor of
 “ his Crown, and vindicating the Rights of his
 “ People. That his Majesty may rely on the

F

“ firm

“ firm and effectual support of the Representa-
 “ tives of a brave and loyal People, in the profe-
 “ cution of a just and necessary War, and in en-
 “ deavouring, under the Blessing of Providence,
 “ to oppose an effectual barrier to the further
 “ progress of a system, which strikes at the secu-
 “ rity and peace of all independent nations, and
 “ is pursued in open defiance of every principle
 “ of moderation, good faith, humanity, and
 “ justice.

“ That in a cause of such general concern, it
 “ must afford us great satisfaction to learn that
 “ his Majesty has every reason to hope for the
 “ cordial co-operation of those powers, who are
 “ united with his Majesty by the ties of alliance,
 “ or who feel an interest in preventing the exten-
 “ sion of anarchy and confusion, and in contri-
 “ buting to the security and tranquility of
 “ Europe.

“ That we are persuaded that whatever his Ma-
 “ jesty's faithful subjects must consider as most
 “ clear and sacred, the stability of our happy
 “ Constitution, the Security and Honor of his
 “ Majesty's Crown, and the preservation of our
 “ Laws, our Liberty, and our Religion, are all
 “ involved in the issue of the present Contest,
 “ and that our zeal and exertions shall be pro-
 “ portioned to the importance of the conjuncture,
 “ and to the magnitude and value of the objects
 “ for which we have to contend.”

*Décret de Fraternité, Seance du 19^{me} Novembre,
1792.*

LA Convention Nationale déclare, au nom de la Nation Française, qu'elle accordera Fraternité et Secours à tous les Peuples qui voudront recouvrer leur Liberté ; et charge le Pouvoir Exécutif de donner aux Généraux les Ordres nécessaires pour porter Secours à ces Peuples, et défendre les Citoyens qui auroient été vexés, ou qui pourroient l'être pour la cause de la Liberté.

Il est décrété que ce Décret soit traduit et imprimé dans toutes les langues.

*Decree of Fraternity, Sitting of the 19th November,
1792.*

The National Convention declare, in the name of the French Nation, that they will grant FRATERNITY and Assistance TO ALL PEOPLE who wish to recover their Liberty : and they charge the Executive Power to send the necessary orders to the Generals, to give assistance to such People, and to defend those Citizens who have suffered, or may suffer, in the cause of Liberty.

SERJEANT—I move that this Decree be translated and printed IN ALL LANGUAGES.

This Proposition is adopted.

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

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Il est décidé que ce District sera traité et im-

James H. Thompson, Secretary of the Board of Trustees

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[illegible]